

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12
EB-08 DOE-15 SOE-02 DOEE-00 /111 W
-----099019 241121Z /10

O R 241005Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5408
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
USLO PEKING
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 1327

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, CZ, UR, WTO
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV VISIT TO PRAGUE--TEN YEARS AFTER DUBCEK OUSTER

REFS: A) PRAGUE 1278, B) MOSCOW 11247

1. SUMMARY: CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA CARRIED MAY 20 THE
SAME ANNOUNCEMENT REPORTED REFTEL B THAT SOVIET PARTY/
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STATE DELEGATION LED BY GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV WILL
VISIT CSSR AT END OF MAY. RUDE PRAVO EDITORIAL MAY 22
BEGAN BEATING DRUMS FOR THE VISIT WITH EMPHASIS ON
MAY--MONTH OF VE DAY-- AS SPECIAL TIME FOR CZECHOSLOVAK
-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP. WITH THIS VISIT COMING ALMOST ON
THE EVE OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1968 ARMED
INTERVENTION, WE CONSIDER IT MOST IMPORTANT FOR ITS

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS -- I.E., BREZHNEV'S EXPECTED REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE HUSAK LEADERSHIP, HUSAK'S REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE RIGIDLY PRO-SOVIET POLITICAL COURSE CHARTED IN 1969, ETC. IN PRAGUE, MOST RUMORS HOLD, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT THE VISIT WILL BE PRIMARILY SIGNIFICANT FOR ITS FOCUS ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. WE DISAGREE, THOUGH WE THINK SUCH MAJOR PROBLEMS AS LONG-TERM ENERGY POLICY AND CEMA INTEGRATION MAY WELL BE AMONG THE MOST SIGNIFICANT TOPICS OF DISCUSSION. WE SEE THESE ISSUES BEING OVER-SHADOWED, NONETHELESS, BY THE SHEER PRESENCE OF THE SOVIET LEADER IN PRAGUE TEN YEARS AFTER HIS INTERVENTION AGAINST DUBCEK AND HIS LAYING DOWN OF THE STILL-VIABLE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE OF LIMITED SOVEREIGNTY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SCHEDULE TO DATE. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT BREZHNEV WILL ARRIVE ON MAY 30. NEITHER KOSYGIN NOR GROMYKO ARE PRESENTLY EXPECTED TO ACCOMPANY HIM; WE HEAR A DEPUTY PREMIER AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE COMING INSTEAD. BREZHNEV AND HUSAK WILL DELIVER TELEVISED ADDRESSES FROM HRADCANY'S SPANISH HALL SOMETIME DURING THE VISIT, AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL TUCEK TELLS ME THEY WILL MEET THE LOCAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON JUNE 2 BEFORE HOSTING A VERY LARGE RECEPTION THAT SAME DAY. TUCEK INDICATES THE SOVIET LEADER WILL VISIT BRATISLAVA AS WELL AS PRAGUE. THE VISIT IS EXPECTED TO END WITH ISSUANCE OF A JOINT
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DECLARATION ON JUNE 3.

3. POLITICAL ASPECTS. WE UNDERSTAND BREZHNEV HAS BEEN WANTING TO COME TO PRAGUE FOR SOME TIME. HIS LAST STATE VISIT HERE WAS IN FEBRUARY 1973. IN THE SPRING OF 1975, PRIOR TO THE HELSINKI SUMMIT, THERE WERE WIDESPREAD RUMORS THAT BREZHNEV WOULD VISIT, AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR MATSKEVICH TOLD THEN-CHARGE PERRY THAT HE THOUGH BREZHNEV "DEFINITELY" WANTED TO COME TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA BUT HAD ENCOUNTERED SCHEDULING AND HEALTH DIFFICULTIES. WHEN THE VISIT FINALLY MATERIALIZES NEXT WEEK, WE WOULD AGREE FULLY WITH MOSCOW'S VIEW THAT DISARMAMENT AND SSOD WOULD LIKELY BE MAJOR PUBLIC THEMES -- ESPECIALLY ACROSS THE BACKDROP OF THE UN SSOD IN NEW YORK. NO DOUBT THERE WILL ALSO BE RENEWED ATTACKS ON THE MEUTRON BOMB. IN PRIVATE, BREZHNEV WILL DOUBTLESS WANT TO DISCUSS WITH HUSAK THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERSHIP SITUATION, WHICH HAS SIMMERED DOWN FROM LAST WINTER'S UNCERTAINTIES OVER REPORTED CRITICISM OF HUSAK FOR SHORTCOMINGS IN ECONOMIC POLICIES. VARIOUS CHANGES IN THE PARTY SECRETARIAT HAVE BEEN MADE SINCE LATE 1977 WITHOUT MUCH AFFECTING ITS COLLEGIAL BALANCE -- EXCEPT

APPARENTLY TO IMPROVE HUSAK'S POSITION SOMEWHAT. WE WONDER
WHETHER BREZHNEV MIGHT ALSO WANT TO SIZE UP FOR HIMSELF CURRENT
DEVELOPMENTS IN TRADITIONAL CZECH-SLOVAK RIVALRY.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRAGUE 1327

4. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS: CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S SLUGGISH ECONOMIC
GROWTH IS SLOWING FURTHER, AND OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON ECONOMIC
PROBLEMS,
INCLUDING ENDLESS EXHORTATIONS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND OUTPUT
QUALITY, SEEM MORE FREQUENT AND ANXIOUS THAN EVER. OF COURSE,
VIRTUALLY ALL THE PROBLEMS TROUBLING THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP ARE
ALSO FOUND IN THE USSR AND OTHER CEMA STATES. SOME,
PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO ENERGY, ARE PERHAPS MORE
URGENT HERE AND WILL CERTAINLY BE DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH.
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LIKE MANY OF ITS ALLIES, CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS EXPERIMENTING WITH RATHER TIMID, STILL-CENTRALIZED MEASURES (PRAGUE A-10) TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, AND THE VISIT COULD WELL FOCUS ON MORE AMBITIOUS BUT POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE REMEDIES. THE RECENT MOSCOW VISITS OF PREMIER STROUGAL, STATE PLANNING CHAIRMAN HULA AND DEPUTY PREMIER ROHLICEK, ALL OF WHOM HAVE SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES, UNDERSCORE THE SOVIETS' CONTINUING CONCERN OVER ECONOMIC PROBLEMS HERE. WE HAVE HEARD FROM ERIC BOURNE, CURRENTLY VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR CORRESPONDENT, THAT CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION WILL BE DEVOTED TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S NEXT TWO FIVE-YEAR PLANS. (BOURNE, INCIDENTALLY, HAS BEEN REFUSED A VISA PROLONGATION TO REMAIN ON TO COVER THE VISIT).

5. NOT A WARSAW PACT SUMMIT: DESPITE CURRENT SPECULATION ACROSS EASTERN EUROPE THAT A WARSAW PACT SUMMIT MAY SOON BE CONVENED, ALL THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO US STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE BREZHNEV VISIT TO PRAGUE WILL BE A STRICTLY BILATERAL AFFAIR. IN FACT, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER JABLONSKY HAS TOLD FRG AMBASSADOR DIESEL UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN LEADERS ARE NOT REPEAT NOT EXPECTED TO BE IN PRAGUE AT THE SAME TIME AS BREZHNEV.
BYRNE

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